Atractus Wagler 1828 is a snake genus widely distributed in the Neotropical region, occurring from Panama to Argentina (Giraudo and Scrochi, 2000; Myers, 2003). It is the most diverse snake genus with about 140 recognized species, with most of them on the Andes and with relatively restricted distribution (Passos et al., 2007; Passos et al., 2009a).

Atractus occipitoalbus (Jan, 1862) inhabits the lowland tropical rainforest and the Andean foothills on the Amazon versant (Passos et al. 2009b). It is a forest dweller found on the ground, amidst leaf litter, or under rocks and logs (Silva 2004). In the last 30 years, new records have expanded the previously known distribution, with most of the records from Ecuador (Passos et al. 2009b). In Colombia, only one occurrence of A. occipitoalbus has been reported on the eastern side of the Cordillera Oriental in the Department of Putumayo (Silva, 2004).

In a recent fieldwork on the northern Andes of Colombia, a female of Atractus occipitoalbus (Figure 1) was collected in the locality El Edén, Vereda San Antonio, municipality of Alejandría, Department of Antioquia, on the eastern flank of the Cordillera Central (6.3676N, 75.0263W, elevation 1280 m above sea level, WGS84) (Figure 2). The specimen was collected at night (21:00 h), on August 19 of 2016. The specimen was photographed, measured, euthanized using 2% Xylocaine and deposited at the Museo de Herpetología Universidad de Antioquia, Medellín, Colombia (MHUA-R 15131). Sex was determined by the absence of hemipenis after a longitudinal incision in the ventral surface of the tail.

The collected specimen presents the following combination of characters (defined as in Passos et al. (2009b)): (1) 15/15/15 smooth dorsal scale rows; (2) 2 postoculars; (3) loreal moderate; (4) 1+2 temporals; (5) 7/7 supralabials, 3–4 contacting orbit; (6) 7/6 infralabials, first four in contact with chinshields; (7) one pair of chinshields; (8) 3/3 gulars; (9) 3 preventrals; (10) 144 ventrals; (11) 18 subcaudals; (12) dorsal color pattern uniform black with a creamish white occipital band;

Figure 1. Atractus occipitoalbus from municipality of Alejandría, Department of Antioquia, Colombia (MHUA-R 15131). A) Live specimen, B) ventral view. Photos by C.M. Marin.
(13) black venter with anterior margins of scales white (Figure 1B); (14) small size, total length 116 mm; (15) short tail, 10 mm (8.62% of total length). According to Passos et al. (2009b) a clear differentiation of *Atractus occipitoalbus* from other *Atractus* species with 15 dorsal scale rows can be established by the following combination of characters: presence of a light color occipital band (absent in *A. albuquerquei, A. boettgeri, A. emmeli, A. reticulatus, A. paraguayensis* and *A. taeniatus*), 7–8 supralabials (6 in *A. albuquerquei, A. boettgeri*, and *A. taeniatus*); 7 maxillary teeth (8–9 in *A. paraguayensis*) and 9–20 subcaudal scales in females (27–44 in *A. albuquerquei, 27–43 in A. boettgeri, 22–30 in A. emmeli, 21–27 in A. reticulatus, 21–30 in *A. paraguayensis*). The values herein reported for specimen MHUA-R 15131 are well within these ranges allowing to unambiguously diagnose it as *Atractus occipitoalbus*.

Our finding represents the second record for this species for Colombia, and the first locality out of the Amazon versant of the Andes. We also extend the latitudinal distribution of the species approximately 661 km north of Department of Putumayo, representing the northernmost record of *Atractus occipitoalbus* in South America (Figure 2). Furthermore, our record expands the upper altitudinal distribution limit of the species by 280 m. A recent study shows another example of a cis-Andean species (*Cochranella resplendens*) that has been found on the eastern slope of the northern Cordillera Central in Colombia (Molina-Zuluaga et al. 2017). These findings highlight the need for thorough sampling in the Magdalena river basin to elucidate the recent biogeographic connection between this region and the western Amazon basin.

*Atractus occipitoalbus* is currently listed as near threatened (NT) in the IUCN redlist due to its reduced geographic range of approximately 9600 Km²; the ongoing decline in the extent and quality of habitat in Colombia by mining, expanding urban areas and expanding small-holder farming; and the construction of hydroelectric dams and associated roads, projected to produce a strong negative impact throughout its distribution range in Ecuador (Cisneros-Heredia et al. 2016). After incorporating the new record, we used the GeoCAT tool (Bachman et al. 2011) and estimated the area of occupancy (AOO) of *A. occipitoalbus* to be approximately 44,000 km². This finding suggests that the IUCN threat status of the species should be reassessed in the near future.

**Acknowledgements**: Specimen collection was conducted under permit No. 112–0046 granted by the Corporación Autónoma Regional CORNARE. This study was funded by Isagen and the Universidad de Antioquia under project 47/574. We thank P. Passos and A. Rodriguez for the comments to the manuscript and J. J. Quintero, R. Puerta and S. Puerta for their assistance in the field.

**References**


Myers, C. (2003): Rare snakes. Five new species from eastern Panama: Reviews of northern *Atractus* and southern *Geophis*
First trans-Andean record of *Atractus occipitoalbus* from Colombia

(Colubridae: Dipsadinae). American Museum Novitates **3391**: 1-47.


